

**Mid-Maine Sustainability Coalition
Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday, April 9, 2009
2:30PM**

Meeting Minutes

1. Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting
 2. Review revised Purpose Statement
 3. Discussion regarding Question of Policy Positions/Legislative Issues
 4. Updates from Team Leaders Meeting
 5. Review of Communication Strategies – Internal and External
 - a. Reorganization of committee groups
 - b. Working document of changes to projects and milestones
 - c. Group loop review
 - d. Morning Sentinel contact
 6. Other Business
 - (a) Summer Interns
 - (b) Forum on the Future
 7. Adjourn
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In attendance:

Sally Harwood, Coalition Coordinator
Elery Keene, Coalition Coordinator
Norm Anderson, Leader – Organization
Chair
Doug Carnrick, Leader – Finance Chair

Steve Erario, Leader – Public Relations
Chair
Michael Roy, City Manager, Waterville
Mike Heavener, Town Manager, Winslow
Peter Nielsen, Town Manager, Oakland

1- Previous meeting minutes (approved)

2- Addition to purpose statement (modified, see attached) and 3- Discussion of Question of Policy Positions/Legislative issues

Norm: We have a consensus oriented philosophy but there needs to be some entity within the coalition that makes these decisions

Steve: Grouploop messaging can fulfill this role.

Sally: We are looking for differences between what the steering committee and what the team leads are doing—even in text

Norm: I don't see the organizational capacity committee making policy and legislative decisions, more as a research and possibly recommendation role

Doug: This is how the chamber does it—committees make recommendations, proposals, and a position statement. Nevertheless, all the decision making power lies with the Board of Directors.

Norm: We can develop a process for inclusive engagement.

Mike R: How does this language sound: "It is understood that until the Coalition decides otherwise, the Steering Committee will be the ultimate decision maker for the team.

Elery: We want to designate significant decision making authority but have final say.

Mike: This group policy and resource decisions on behalf of the entire coalition.

Elery: General policy.

Sally: How do we keep it grassroots?

Sally: The committee as someone who keeps us on vision.

Doug: Ultimate decision making tool if there is disagreement with the steering committee.

Mike R: I think they would and they could override our committee. We are serving at the pleasure of the entire group.

Mike H: Maybe policy can be tied to the group as a whole

Elery: Overall or general policy

Norm: We will not tell local food groups what to do with their directive

Elery: If they want to finance and run a year round local food store on main street, we are not concerned with that money

Mike R: What about this phrasing: “Generally speaking such decisions will be limited to the allocation of resources raised from the financial team/overall group and matters of policy in keeping with the goals of the 2020 Vision.”

Elery: If team 1 finds money specifically for their energy objective, we don’t have oversight of those funds.

Sally: Can we say we are guided by the vision for policy and financial decisions?

Norm: We don’t want to convene the 8 team leaders on issues of policy—we want to represent them.

Sally: At some point do we ask whether this meets with your needs and understanding—consensus building is the main goal.

Doug: I have a concern that at some point we have a trademark/brand and I see us or the coordinators charged in protecting the credibility or safety of what has been created.

Norm: Getting back to Elery’s point on the interns, there are a clear set of tasks they can do for different teams, especially for team 1 and 3. How do we sort all that out. Trust is the important thing to keep with each of the teams.

Sally: The issue I see is how to oversee everything. I don’t know how to do it, let’s keep it alive and in their thoughts.

Norm: What Doug was saying is that we want to maintain and enhance the culture and spirit of the coalition.

All: In agreement about the revised purpose statement for the steering committee (attached).

Doug: You can go to extremes on getting everyone's opinion and input. At some point, it needs to be a representative body.

Mike R: What do we do with legislative issues, e.g. recent issues with people coming to the group with specific ideas

Norm: Mid-Coast Green Collaborative has done a lot in energy efficiency and auditing, a lot in alternative energy, similar to our goals. The particular issue on top of their agenda this year is feed in tariffs. Feed in tariffs basically establish a rate which CMP is required to purchase renewably generated electricity in the home at a premium. The representative from the Mid-Coast Green Collaborative met almost simultaneously for Mike H and myself to motivate people in Winslow in order to lobby Ken Fletcher to vote for the issue. It felt like we were being pressured heavily to change Ken's vote instead of an educational focus. My feeling is that the coalition should not be part of this process.

Doug: If there was a proposal from one of these objectives we might say this is okay if we, for the time being, accept proposals only from within the group.

Mike H: A person's motivation or agenda should not deter us from coming to understand a larger idea.

Elery: Agreed. But I have questions and I want to know much more about it to decide on what we should do.

Mike R: I would want advice from our members such as John Joseph and Tom Tietenberg on these issues relating to energy. Would it raise consumer electric prices? Etc.

Elery: Our power rates are based on bids, including from groups outside of Maine. This is a complex issue.

Norm: The other thing he wanted to do was to take the list of the catalyst email group and contact them directly.

Mike R: He could of because the emails are now public information online.

Norm: He was all set to do that and I talked with him a couple of times last night in order to dissuade him.

Mike R: In the formation of the eight objectives was one dedicated to address policy matters?

Doug: Communications would be the closest.

Elery: I think this is the policy committee.

Mike R: Can we have a group of us meet with their group (the Mid-Coast Green Collaborative) to determine what they're doing.

Sally: Can we invite all interested groups to Waterville?

Norm/Mike R: They had an event like that for last year.

Norm: Three or four in my mind. 1-Mid-Coast Green Collaborative; 2-Lewiston-Auburn; 3-Kennebunk area; 4-Kittery area; 5-Biddeford/Saco. Lets meet with them in order form the basis of a larger meeting.

Doug: Are you saying we would set the agenda

Norm: Possibly using feed-in tariff as organizing focus

Include the purpose statement in the meeting as a whole. As a group still have to determine how to handle policy related questions.

4-Updates from Team Leader Meeting

Norm: we are at the point where we are looking at where milestones have changed, getting minutes from meetings, etc, without worrying too much about format.

Mike-still not clear about what will be done for reporting?

Elery-Our main goal right now should be to keep copies of minutes and submit on GroupLoop.

Sally-Issues: 1-crossing over of main objective between education and energy, 2-education committee seems to be focused on Skowhegan (retracted) 4- Geoff Hill. My concern is that this could be a very visible committee.

Elery- Curriculum (uniform), may need to touch base with Unity college

Action Item- Check up with the item 4 committee (Steve E)

Doug- Can we organize a list of folks on the Catalyst that have not yet become involved in any of the committees?

Norm- One thing I committed to do is to determine where each of the objectives is and then determine how to

Doug-Explode a couple things every two weeks, possibly in the form of a newsletter

Ask for feedback from team leaders on newsletter going out to group by early next week

5-Review of Communications Strategies

Norm – The end goal for reporting to the group what the teams are doing and also soliciting from the groups what their needs are (this is the internal part of joint committee 3, 5 8). This way we can have an idea on what's changed in their work plan, what problems they're encountering, and where we can support them. At some point we want to get to an evaluation form for the groups.

Mike R- So steering committee communication would likely go through you, Norm.

Norm- Yes, we are going to collect this info and have monthly reports for the steering committee

Contact with Morning Sentinel

-Lets set up a meeting with Colin or Amy to discuss (Mike Roy, Norm, Steve will sit in on this meeting)

Forum on the Future – make note to all team leaders that this event is going on

Peter- It almost looks like there are very similar goals to what is begin done there and what is being done here. A program of speakers has been lined up for the day by KVCOG hosted in the REM Forum space. It seems like these two ought to relate. Sounded like a tenuous connection with the group. Seems like isolation between very similar goals.

Elery- Lets have presence at this meeting, especially on this track. My understanding is that this is meant for municipalilites??

Peter- I was asked to go and I asked for the connection.

Mike- I will call Ken saying a number of our members want to be part of this. If any of us can get up and report briefly on the matters of the Coalition.

Doug-Bring a sign-up sheet.

Mike-We need a Mid-Maine Sustainability Coalition brochure

Next meeting: April 23